

THE BAPTIST Record

JOURNAL OF THE MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST CONVENTION

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IED SINCE 1877
ARCH 10, 2005
VOL. 129
No. 10

MAR 22 2005

Performing arts highlighted at festival

By William H. Perkins Jr.
Editor

Plenty of excitement was to be found at the 2005 Christian Performing Arts Festival, held February 25-26 at Morrison Heights Church, Clinton — but that's typical of the people who attend the annual event sponsored by the Discipleship and Family Ministry Department of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board.

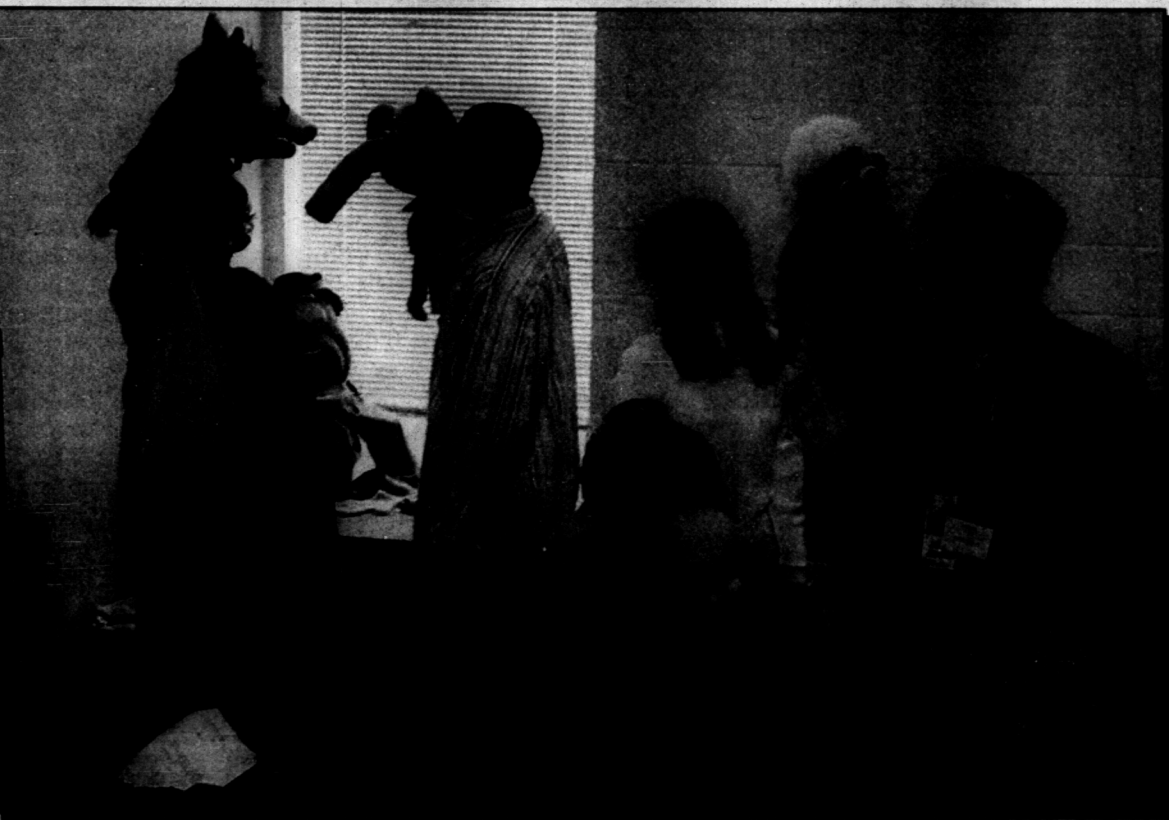
"They come wanting to get new ideas on how to carry on ministry by using the performing arts. You can feel the enthusiasm in the air," said Myrna Gregory of Brandon, festival coordinator and contract consultant for the board's Discipleship and Family Ministry Department. Gregory is a member of Pinelake Church, Brandon.

Gregory said about 540 people attended the festival, down slightly from last year but more than enough to pack the halls and classrooms of Morrison Heights Church. Among the training sessions:

- Puppetry, including choreography, special effects, ventriloquism, and Bunraku and glove techniques.
- Recreation activities, such as sports evangelism, games with a purpose, fitness, and hosting evangelism camps.
- Clowning, including character development, juggling, hospital clowning, ballooning, and spiritual applications for illusions.
- Drama, such as directing, voice training, creative movement, script writing, and set design.

Christians are searching for ways to conduct relevant ministries in today's world, Gregory said. "The performing arts is one of the tools that is so relevant to ministry today," she pointed out.

Gregory expressed her appreciation to the staff of Morrison Heights Church for



PENCHANT FOR PUPPETS — Darren Casteel (right) of Buford, Georgia, instructs participants at the 2005 Christian Performing Arts Festival on the fine points of puppet choreography. In addition to puppetry, performing arts subjects covered at the festival included clowning, drama, and recreation. (BR photo by William H. Perkins Jr.)

their assistance, including the worship ministry and Mark Sandifer, the children's minister.

"Mark has a servant's heart. Nothing was too big or too small for him to handle," she said.

Serving with Gregory on the planning committee for the 2005 Christian Performing Arts Festival were:

- Bobby Everett, a member of Parkway Church, Clinton.

- Martha Cannon, a member of Calvary Church, Batesville.
- Perry Robbins, a former Mississippi Baptist pastor residing in Hattiesburg.
- Vicki Roberts, a member of Pinelake Church, Brandon.

The Christian Performing Arts Festival is funded by the Miss. Cooperative Program. The 2006 festival will be held on February 24-25, at First Church, Clinton. Gregory can be e-mailed at mgreg81@bellsouth.net.

Miss. CP down for month

Gifts to the work of the Lord through the Mississippi Cooperative Program (CP) in February showed a drop when compared to the previous month — always a high giving month — but also reflected a significant increase over giving in the same month last year, according to Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer of the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board which disburses the funds. The February total of \$2,666,974 is 16.93% lower than the \$3,210,450 given last month, and 34.17% higher than the \$1,987,796 given in the same period in 2004. Total Mississippi CP giving for the current fiscal year, which runs from January-December, stands at \$5,877,424, which is 13.55% above last year's giving during the same period and 12.61% ahead of current year budget needs. The 2005 Mississippi CP budget of \$31,314,491, was approved by messengers to the 2004 annual meeting of the Mississippi Baptist Convention. A total of \$2,609,541 is needed each month to meet the convention board's budget for 2005. In addition to helping support more than 10,700 missionaries in the U.S. and around the world through affiliation with the Southern Baptist Convention, Mississippi CP also helps fund such programs as Hispanic women's Retreat on March 18-19 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton, the Church Library Ministry Retreat on March 31-April 1 at Camp Garaywa in Clinton, and Bible Drills beginning in April at various locations around the state.

SBC CP lower in February

NASHVILLE, Tenn. (BP and local reports) — Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) Cooperative Program receipts in February of \$16,393,096 were 19.42% below the \$20,342,957 received the previous month and 9.52% above the \$14,967,782.15 received in February 2004, according to a news release from SBC Executive Committee President and Chief Executive Officer Morris H. Chapman. Year-to-date contributions through the Southern Baptist Convention's Cooperative Program are up 3.32 % compared to the same time frame in 2004. As of February 28, the year-to-date total of \$83,008,038 for Cooperative Program (CP) Missions is \$2,668,276 ahead of the \$80,339,762 received at the same point in 2004. Designated giving of \$89,778,720 for the same year-to-date period is 4.24%, or \$3,974,403 below gifts of \$93,753,123 received at this point last year. The \$52,199,386 in designated gifts received last month is \$2,224,023 below the \$54,423,410 received in February 2004, a decrease of 4.1%. For the SBC Cooperative Program Allocation Budget, the year-to-date total of \$83,008,038 is 108.74% of the \$76,334,039 budgeted, or \$6,673,999 above budget to support Southern Baptist ministries globally and across North America. At the close of their last fiscal year, Oct. 1, 2003 - Sept. 30, 2004, Southern Baptists recorded a 3.64% increase in CP giving, for a record total of \$189,865,255.

WHAT'S IN THE RECORD

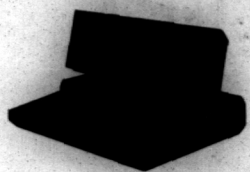
Looking Back
3

Directions
4

College News
6

Sunday School Lessons
7

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Jackson, MS 39205-0530.

Send news, communication, and
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VOLUME 129 • NUMBER 10
(ISSN-0005-5778)

Published weekly except weeks of July 4 and Christmas by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, 515 Mississippi Street, Jackson, MS 39201. Subscription \$9.35 per year payable in advance. Economy plans available for cooperating Mississippi churches. Periodicals postage paid at Jackson, MS. Member, Association of State Baptist Papers. Deadlines: News items — one calendar week prior to requested publication date. Advertising — two calendar weeks prior to requested publication date. All submissions are subject to editing.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

— Declaration of Independence
July 4, 1776

By the time those words had been penned, American revolutionaries were already at war against the greatest colonial power of the time. Battles had been joined at Lexington and Concord, Ticonderoga had been seized, and the Continental Congress was meeting in Philadelphia. It was during the June 7, 1776, session of the Continental Congress that the fateful motion was made to draft a resolution formally stating that "These United Colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states."

John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, Robert Livingston, and Roger Sherman were named to the committee charged with drafting such a resolution. There was swift agreement that Jefferson should write the document, which was approved by the Continental Congress on July 4, 1776, and became what we recognize today as the Declaration of Independence.

Jefferson and the others, at the time seeking only to secure the liberty to claim the rights they acknowledged had given to them by their Creator, could not have understood the earth-shaking consequences of the revolution in human history they had wrought. For the more than 225 years since the American Revolution, people around the globe have yearned to be as free as Americans. Some have been successful in achieving their dream. Some have not. Many have paid with their lives for trying.

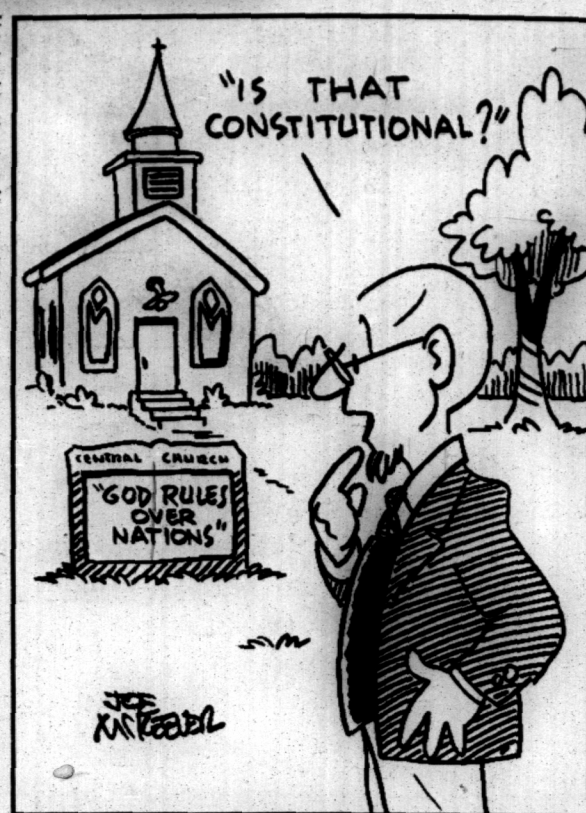
Those of us who have lived long enough remember the uprising against Soviet communism in Eastern Europe and the challenge to Chinese communism in Beijing's Tiananmen Square. The fall of the Soviet empire was achieved, but the Chinese people were not as fortunate. Still, the bells of liberty and freedom continue to peal across the world. People want to be free.

Hopeful signs indicate that we may be on the cusp of a worldwide revolution. Regardless of one's politics or opinion on the War on Terror, it's a fact that citizens of Afghanistan and Iraq participated in overwhelming numbers and with great resolve in recent freely-held elections in those countries. Even many critics of current American policy have felt compelled to admit that freedom is advancing in those countries — certainly not without great difficulties, but our transition to democracy in America was not flawless, either.

The people of Lebanon have now arisen to drive out Syria, their foreign occupier, and reclaim their country after decades of oppression. College students and young adults in Iran are openly agitating for radical change in their strict Muslim theocratic government. Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, the country's unchallenged strongman for nearly 24 years, has announced timid reforms amid growing democratic rumblings. Even totalitarian Libya seeks to enact reforms sufficient to remove its reputation as a pariah nation.

All of this can be great news for evangelical Christians, who have been shut out of so many of the countries now moving toward freedom. The potential for sharing the Gospel with people who have never before had an opportunity to hear it is as great right now as it was in the first century. The budding freedom movements may take several more years to mature, but Christians must be prepared.

The fall of the Berlin Wall, and symbolically of Soviet communism, caught many Christians and Christian groups off-guard.



Let's not let that happen this time. Signs of monumental change are once again all around us. Let us begin praying now for oppressed people all over the world and for the opportunity to tell each one of them how much God loves them. Southern Baptists should also begin now to financially provide for the coming opportunities by supporting the International Mission Board and the Cooperative Program.

When the hand of God moves this time, may we be alert, willing, and ready to meet the challenge head-on. Such is our duty as followers of Christ.

GUEST OPINION:



Church Music RFD, still going strong

By Danny R. Jones
Nashville

in its diversity as it was focused in its intent. The team, consisting of pastors, lay and volunteer leaders, college and seminary professors, and denominational workers, addressed music ministry and worship needs of small membership churches, staying in tune to the goal of producing a "cornbread and peas" approach to training music leaders in this important area of denominational life.

Although written by and for Mississippians, thousands of copies of Church Music RFD literally have found their way around the world. Because of a universal need for ongoing training for those who volunteer or lead church music on a part-time basis with little or no formal training in music, and because of its practical approach, Church Music RFD is used today in college and seminary classrooms,

foreign mission settings, seminary extension programs, and associational and denominational music training events.

McCaleb has been the global promoter of Church Music RFD since its release. Whether traveling small towns and country roads of Route 1 America, or to far-flung mission points around the world, his car trunk or suitcase is never without a few copies of the book. McCaleb teaches the book's contents with the seal of a missionary — which he really is at heart.

L. Graham Smith, current director of the church music department for the convention board, and responsible for providing training and resources for music and worship leaders throughout the state, has reaffirmed the continuing value of Church Music RFD throughout his tenure as director.

This resource was reprinted and updated in 1980 and 1982 during Hall's tenure as director, and then again in 1987 and 1995 to reflect changes in resources referenced in the book. Throughout each revision and update, the practical usefulness has always been maintained.

While many denominational music training products have come and gone through the years, Church Music RFD continues its trek into the lives and ministries of men and women across our state, country, and world, as an indispensable tool for training lay music leadership in our churches.

Happy birthday, Church Music RFD! May your next 25 years of service continue to produce church music leaders who can help others worship God because of the training, insights, and inspiration you are providing.

Jones is a retired employee of LifeWay Christian Resources in Nashville. For more information on Church Music RFD, contact McCaleb at Church Music Department, Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. Telephone: (601) 292-3273 or toll-free outside Jackson (800) 748-1651, ext. 273. E-mail: jmccaleb@mbcb.org.

Scholar: biblical history battle heating up

NEW ORLEANS (BP) — Revisionist scholars in Europe are ignoring a wealth of archaeological evidence in seeking to discount and, ultimately, erase belief in the biblical Israel, noted archaeologist William Dever said at New Orleans Seminary.

Dever, professor emeritus of Near Eastern archaeology and anthropology at the University of Arizona, shared his research during the Manuel Family Lecture on Archaeology and the Bible in early February. The lecture is designed to present current archaeological research pointing to the reliability of Scripture.

Dever described the revisionists' propositions as: "There is no history in the Hebrew Bible. It's all written too late to be reliable. It is all a myth. There was no real ancient or biblical Israel. There was no exodus, no Sinai, no [Hebrew] faith, no conquest of Canaan, no Israelite ethnicity."

"In fact," he said, "they have recently argued that Hebrew is not a Semitic language."

Dever said the revisionists discount the early Hebrew state as well as King David and King Solomon and the historical prophets, and they view the stories of the Bible as social constructs of a later period. These scholars even deny the exile and the return.

"In the end, there is, in fact, nothing left," Dever said of the revisionists' view. "The Hebrew Bible is the greatest literary hoax ever perpetuated in history until these clever fellows figured it out 10 years ago."

Though this postmodern movement seeks to sap the Bible of its historical significance and accuracy, Dever maintains that the archaeological evidence supports the biblical accounts of Israel and its kings. His presentation focused on structures he and other archaeologists have uncovered throughout the Holy Land that point to Solomon and the Solomon Temple. He began with 1 Kings 9:15-16.

The biblical text records that the Egyptian pharaoh had destroyed Gezer and burned its remains. After the destruction at Gezer, the text tells that King Solomon rebuilt Gezer and started building projects at Hazor, Megiddo and Jerusalem.

This widespread fortification, Dever said, points to the centralization or statehood of Israel at this time. However, the revisionists do not even believe the Israel of this time (the 10th century before Christ) qualifies as a state.

"Now the revisionists have said Israel was too small to be a state, and they argue there were only a few thousand people in all of Israel and Judah," he said. "In fact, archaeologists have documented a population of more than a hundred thousand. Statehood, ladies and gentlemen, is not about size. It's about centralization and complexity."

Both centralization and complexity, Dever demonstrated,

were present in Israel during that period in history. He first offered photographs of the remains found at Hazor, a city equipped with a quadruple entryway gate, guard towers and a double wall.

"We're talking about monumental defense works that only a king could have sponsored," Dever said. "A bunch of Israelite farmers didn't get together one day and say, 'Let's build a city gate.' This is not vernacular architecture. This is monumental architecture, which could only have been built with the resources that some sort of king in some sort of capital could have commanded."

This Phoenician-style construction and fortification is not unique to Hazor. Dever offered photographs that illustrate both Megiddo and Gezer were built in the same way, with a quadruple gate, double wall and towers. Each of the sites can be dated to the reign of Solomon, he said. To counter any accusations of being biblically biased, Dever used pottery shards he found while excavating the gate at Gezer to establish a 12th century B.C. date.

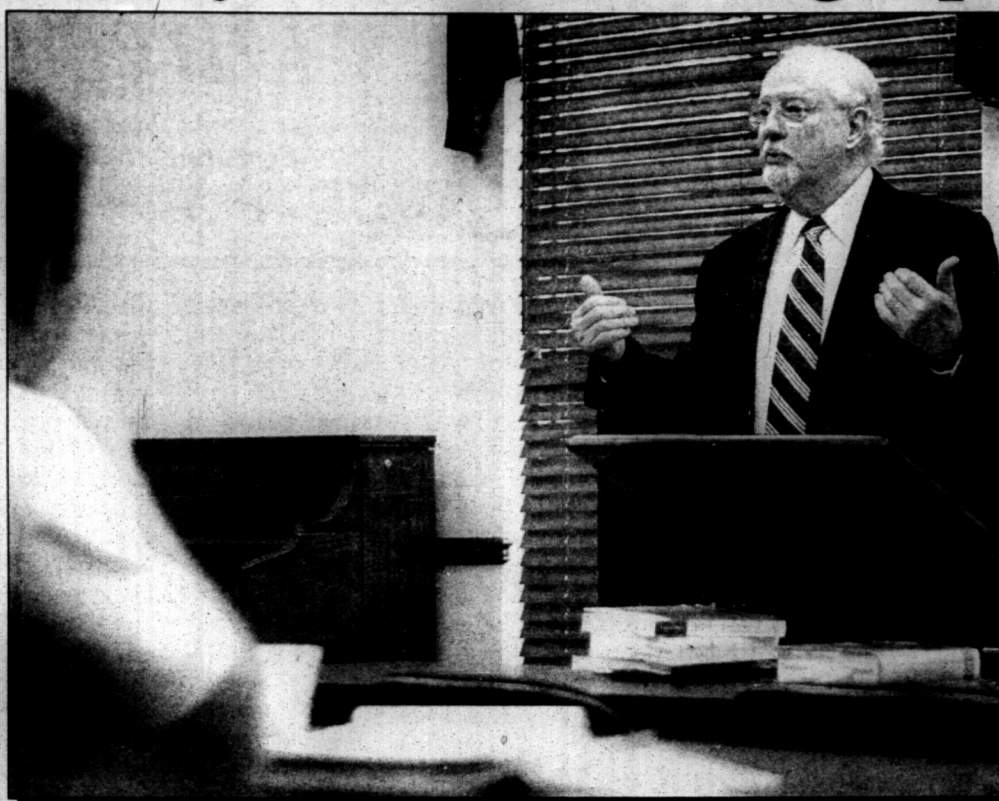
"Our date does not come from a literalistic reading of the Bible," he said. "I would date this material the same way if the Bible had never been written. We're basing our date on ceramic typology and on textual evidence where we have it."

Pottery from this period, Dever explained, was burnished by hand. It was not until the ninth century B.C. that pottery was burnished on a wheel. While wheel-burnished pottery has perfectly concentric circles on the surface, hand-burnished pottery does not. In this way, Dever is able to date the pottery from Gezer and Hazor to the time of Solomon.

In addition to dating these sites with ceramic typology, Dever said archaeologists have been able to date them by their levels of destruction. This is another way scholars can attribute Megiddo to Solomon.

"We indeed have a number of destructions [that occurred at Megiddo] in the late 10th century. This is important because, according to both Kings and Chronicles, five years after Solomon's death this raid took place," Dever said.

Egyptian chronologies report that Shishak carried out these raids in the year 925. With these Egyptian records, scholars have the date 930 B.C. for Solomon's death, Dever said.



JOINING THE FIGHT — William Dever, professor emeritus of Near Eastern archaeology and anthropology at the University of Arizona, underscores the archaeological evidence against revisionist scholars who discount the biblical Israel. (Photo courtesy of New Orleans Seminary)

"So here we have a claim that the levels... were destroyed by this pharaoh around 925," he said. "If so, they must have been built during the lifetime and reign of Solomon."

This avenue of evidence also runs through Gezer. Dever displayed pictures taken at Gezer during the 1984 and 1990 dig seasons that show the wall of Gezer was breached sometime in antiquity. The stones making up the gate of the wall were burned and cracked, and the limestone has been melted by fire. "Within 20 or 30 years of its construction, it is destroyed," Dever said.

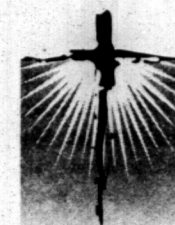
Once again, the evidence that cements the date of this destruction is the pottery found at that level that dates to the 10th century. Dever also noted that, while archaeologists have used the Carbon 14 dating system to attribute other attacked sites to Shishak, they have no datable samples from Gezer. In the summer of 2006, Steven Ortiz, director of the NOBTS Center for Archaeological Research and former student of

Dever, hopes to lead students in a new excavation at Gezer. One of his objectives is to gather Carbon 14 data from Gezer. "Some of my esteem for Steve is the fact that I have not asked any of my other students to follow up my work at Gezer, but I am proud the work will resume," Dever said.

As for Solomon's Temple, the fourth building project mentioned in 1 Kings 9:15-16, no remains have been found to date. However, the biblical description of the temple coupled with remains of Phoenician temples from the same period give scholars an idea of what Solomon's Temple looked like.

Still, revisionists ignore such evidence, Dever said. "They will demolish any facts that don't suit their theories," he said.

"If the Hebrew Bible is a literary hoax," Dever noted, "then you people here are the greatest fools. If it's not, then we need to think of ways to make it come alive again, and I don't know any better way than archaeology."



MISSISSIPPI
BAPTISTS

**THE
SECOND
FRONT PAGE**

Record

PUBLISHED SINCE 1877

MARCH 10, 2005

VOL. 129

No. 10

Looking back

10 years ago

Southern Baptists give \$85.5 million to their Lottie Moon Christmas Offering in 1994, topping \$85 million for the first time ever.

20 years ago

A five million dollar damage suit against the Southern Baptist Foreign Mission Board has been dismissed "without prejudice" by U.S. District Court Judge D. Dortch Warriner. The suit grew out of an alleged beating by Turkish immigrants of a former foreign mission service volunteer.

50 years ago

Bogue Chitto Church dedicates a historical marker at the church. The church was the meeting place for the organization of the first Baptist State Convention in 1824.

ChoicePoint issues statement

Due to concerns raised by recent news reports related to ChoicePoint, Inc., the company that performs criminal background checks for the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board, a visit to ChoicePoint's web site is recommended for information on the fraudulent activity and how the company is addressing the issue. ChoicePoint's web site is www.choicepoint.com.

STAFF CHANGES

Henry Robertson began pastoring Calvary Church, Eupora, on Feb. 6. He may be reached at (662) 323-0469.

Charles E. Maples retired after 51 years of preaching. He pastored churches in Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi and served as associate pastor in Louisiana and North Carolina. Maples is available for supply preaching and interim work. Now residing in Alabama, he may be contacted at (256) 272-0956.

Oakland Church of Three Forks, Walnut, has called Jimmy May, Jr., as pastor.

Wynndale Church, Byram, welcomes Jerry Smith as pastor. Smith attended Mississippi State and New Orleans Theological Seminary. Smith is married to the former Patty Sutherland, and they have three children, Casey, Graham, and Leslie.



Maples



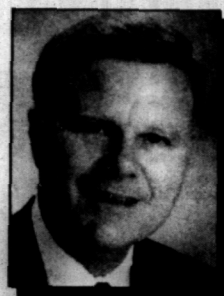
Smith

THE VIEW FROM A DISTANCE

When you look at something it can look very different depending on whether you are seeing it from near or from afar. Seeing the land from 35,000 feet up on a clear day makes the terrain look far different than if you are in a car riding along the highway. On a couple of occasions I have flown over the Grand Canyon, and if it is clear the pilot always calls attention to the fact that if you look out your window you can see the Grand Canyon. Of course, it is huge but from that high altitude it is not much more impressive than a Mississippi gully. Things change when you see them from a distance or from up close and you get a different perspective.

You may have heard about the old fellow who had never flown before in his life. He never really had a desire to fly, but because of an emergency he was going to have to take a flight and he was scared to death. Everything was frighteningly new. He found his seat, buckled himself in, and sat there looking around the cabin and then looked out of the window. He turned to the fellow sitting next to him and said, "Would you look at that. It's amazing! The people down there on the ground look like ants." His flying partner said, "Sir, those are ants. We haven't taken off yet."

Things do look different depending on whether you are close or far away. A few months



Directions

Jim Futral, executive director-treasurer
Mississippi Baptist Convention Board

back I was attending the first service at the church where my son is pastor. After the service was over and the exchange of congregations was taking place, a crowd was leaving and another crowd was coming in. I was standing down front just visiting with some folks when a husband and wife came down the aisle and just wanted to shake my hand. They informed me that they had been visiting for several Sundays sitting at the back and were planning to join the church. I said, "Well, wonderful!" Then the lady said to me, "It is remarkable to me how much like your dad you are." I was not quite sure what she meant and then she went on to explain, "We have heard your dad preach also and it is just amazing that the two of you look so much alike." I pointed across the building to where Rob was standing and visiting with folks. I said, "I think that is really who you are looking for and wanting to speak to and I need to tell you I am my dad." She didn't need to be but she was somewhat embarrassed because she had thought that I

was Rob. Though we may look somewhat alike and even occasionally act alike there is a six or eight year's age difference between my son and me. Things look different whether you are up close or far away. Now if you are wondering what the point of my article is let me suggest to you two or three things that can be learned from this.

• One, it is helpful to get as many views from as many angles and as close up and even as far away as you can to determine what is really happening and what you are really seeing.

• A second important lesson to learn is it is best not to jump to conclusions just at the first look. Sometimes folks hear something or see something and immediately jump to all kinds of conclusions about what is going on when they ought to step back, take another look, take a deep breath, and even ask a simple question, "What happened here?" Things can look amazingly different. I often remind myself of the story of Joseph. Whenever he was accused by Potiphar's wife

of attacking her, Joseph was trying to get away from doing wrong. She screamed, he ran out of the room, she had his coat in her hand, and so clearly he had done something wrong. Well, you can't always believe everything you see, and you sure can't believe everything you hear. So off to the jailhouse Joseph would go for two years for trying to do right.

• A third thought that I would encourage you to hold on to is to ask God to give you good sight or maybe more importantly to give you a pair of glasses that filter life through lens of mercy and forgiveness. In the Lord's Prayer Jesus instructed us to learn to pray, "Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."

Look at the world of relationships and the awkward things that come up, and even the things that are missing and see them with eyes of grace, mercy, and a willingness to forgive. A God-given touch in your life will enable you to cut somebody some slack and to be gentle with others because when you do you will begin to see as Jesus sees. Taking in what it looks like up close, recognizing what it might look like from afar, and caring about the folks who are involved will eventually improve our eyesight.

The author may be contacted at P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. E-mail: jfutral@mbcb.org.

JUST FOR THE RECORD

1. Richard Ethridge pastor of Grace United Church, Newton Association, presented Juston Dean with a certificate following his first sermon on Jan. 30. He was licensed to the ministry by the congregation in the February business meeting.

2. Harrisville Church, Simpson County, recently celebrated a building note burning ceremony. The congregation paid off the note ten years early. Shown are James Harris, trustee; Eric Dear, deacon chairman; Troy Griffin, finance chairman; and Carl Parker, trustee.

3. First Church, Tupelo, invites all women to attend Mary, the Mother of Jesus, an original monologue presented by Rita Sweatt on Thurs., Apr. 21, 6-8 p.m. Tickets are \$10 and include a catered meal and childcare. For more information, contact the church at (662) 842-1327.

4. Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association, Brotherhood selected Jimmy Wallis as Man of the Year. He was presented a plaque by Enoch Stacy on Baptist Men's Day, Jan. 23. Shown are Wallis and Stacy.



1. Ethridge and Dean, Grace United Church, Newton Assn



4. Wallis and Stacy, Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association



2. Note Burning, Harrisville Church, Simpson County

What I tell you in the darkness, speak in the light; and what you hear whispered in your ear, proclaim upon the

HOUSE TOPS.

Matthew 10:27 NAS

March 10, 2005

HouseTops is a Baptist Record supplement produced by the Mississippi Baptist Convention Board's Communication Services.



LAD/CRUSADER DAY

April 16

Central Hills Baptist Retreat
Kosciusko

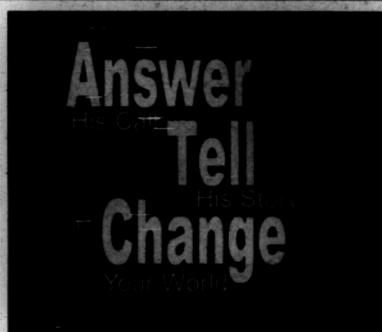
Cost: \$4

Bring a sack lunch (drink provided)

• Best Chapter Award

- RA Racers
- Show & Tell
- Speak-Out

- Mission Project/Banner Competition
- Campcraft & Field Competition



FOR INFO: Phone: 601-292-3335 in Jackson or 1-800-748-1651, ext. 335

OLDER CHILDREN'S Bible Drill Camp \$\$\$\$



Mississippi
BIBLE
DRILL



For Church Groups of Boys
and Girls Grades 5 - 8
(completed)

\$\$\$ Deposit with Registration
Total Cost \$\$\$

July 5 - 8 Central Hills Baptist Retreat

For info: Discipleship and Family Ministry Department \$\$\$ or \$\$\$

YOUNG MUSICIANS CAMP

Gulfshore

JUNE 24-28

Guest Director: Ruth Lewis

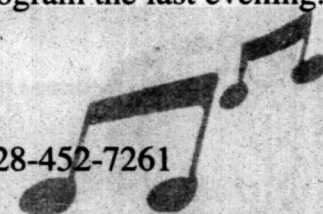
Music Assistant

North Phoenix Baptist Church, Phoenix, Arizona

Both Gulfshore and Blue Mountain camps are for boys and girls who have finished the 4-6 grades by June 1, 2005. They do not have to be members of a choir. Most children love music and like to sing. They will learn the music at camp and present a program the last evening. Parents and guests are invited.

Cost is \$155

Register with Gulfshore Baptist Assembly: 228-452-7261



YOUNG MUSICIANS CAMP

Blue Mountain

JULY 25-29

Guest Director: Wayne Causey

Minister of Music

Forest Hills Baptist Church, Nashville



Each day both camps include two worship services, two rehearsals, two classes (one music activity and one spiritual) and afternoon electives such as crafts, outdoor splash games, handbells, art, swimming, drama and many more. There is also a fun feature each night that faculty and children can participate in.

Cost is \$112

Contact the Church Music Dept. for registration forms: 601-292-2271 or 1-800-748-1651



STATE SENIOR ADULT RETREATS Gulfshore Baptist Assembly

TO REGISTER, CALL 228-452-7261.

Retreat I

May 10-13 (4 days)

Ferris Jordan

Retreat II

May 16-18

Joe Sherrer

Retreat III

May 19-21

Joe McKeever

Retreat IV

September 27-29

J. Garland McKee

2005 Preaching & Worship Conference

Monday, April 25, FBC, Biloxi

Tuesday, April 26, Highland Colony BC, Ridgeland

PASTORAL PREACHING

Featured Presenters

Frank Lewis & Blake Scafidel

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Chris Layton

May 30 - June 3

Jon Daniels

Kevin Williams

June 3 - 7

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Will Reedy

June 7 - 11

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Will Reedy

June 16 - 20

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June 20 - 24

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**Primer Retiro Anual
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"En tu presencia hay plenitud de gozo..." Salmo 16:11

March 18-19, 2005

18-19 de Marzo de 2005

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Costo: \$15 por persona

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Registración empieza a las 2:00 p.m. el Viernes 18 de Marzo

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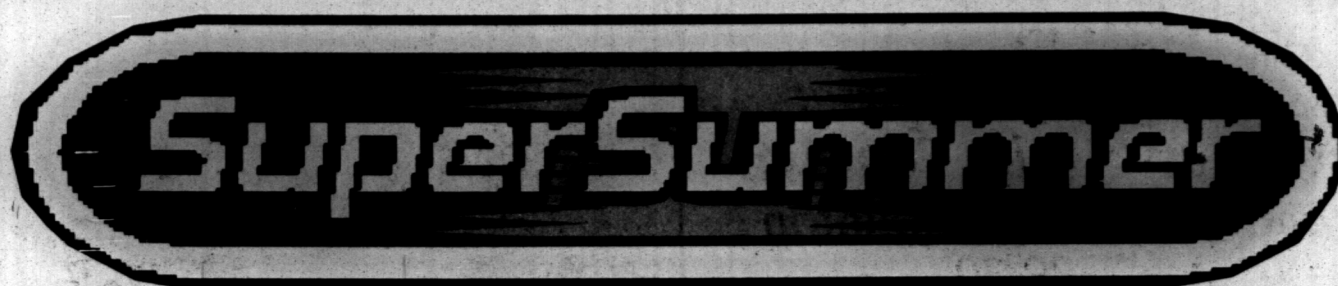
Preregistration with the fee in advance is necessary. Contact Kay McDonnell for more information: 601-292-3305, 1-800-748-1651 or E-mail kmedonnell@mbcb.org.

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March 22, 2005
8:30 a.m. - 3 p.m.

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1531 Highland Colony Parkway
Madison, Mississippi

For more info call the Pastor/Leadership Development Dept. at 601-292-3305 or 1-800-748-1651



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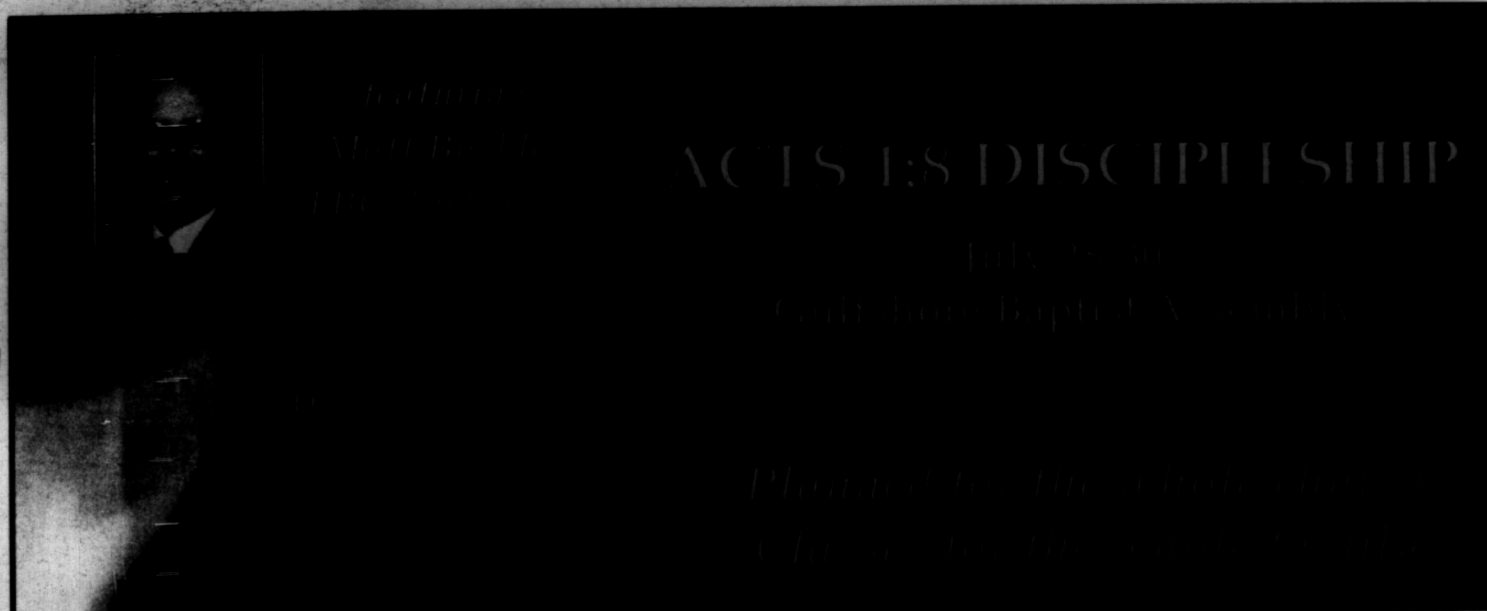
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McLaurin Heights Baptist Church

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Pray this day for...

March 11-24, 2005

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"When I start each day I make it a point to spend an hour in prayer with God. But, if I have a particularly busy day and am more rushed than usual, I make it a point to spend two hours with God before I begin the day."

Martin Luther

For: (1) Missions Mobilization Celebration Banquet, FBC, Jackson (MMOB); (2) Specialized Workers Training, Camp Garaywa (WMU); (3) Maner Tyson, pastor and director of Waterbury Ministries in Connecticut, requests prayer for the church as they restructure and for new church starts there.

For: (1) Missions Mobilization Conference, Baptist Building, Jackson (MMOB); (2) Young Ringers Festival, Parkway BC, Clinton (CM); (3) Pray for Tabare Vasquez, an oncologist who was elected president of Uruguay Oct. 31, 2004. His left-of-center party received a majority in both houses of Parliament.

Pray for a rapid and easy adjustment to the Bulgarian culture and work in the Balkans for Leigh S, an ISC worker who arrived February 15. Also, pray that the Lord will reveal to the "vision team" coming to Bulgaria this month exactly how and where He is working among the Muslims of Bulgaria.

A young man, L, is in a hospital in Tanzania. He was in a bus wreck in November. He just had surgery to re-break and repair a bone in his leg that had healed badly. God has done surgery on his heart. Pray for his complete healing, and that this eight weeks that he will be in traction will be a time of growing in the Word.

Alecia Byassee is an associate campus minister at Murray State University in Kentucky. Pray for the women's ministry at MSU, the continuation of God's work, and for the motivation and burden to reach the campus by the students.

Please pray for the youth of Nelsville in Neispruit, South Africa. They are involved in a six-week study of the "True Love Waits" abstinence program. Pray for an understanding of God's plans for them to be safe and happy emotionally and physically.

For: (1) Campers On Missions, Freewill Baptist Youth Camp, Waynesboro (MM); (2) Pray for two church-planting training events in Kolkata, India, in March. One will teach workers how to use Chronological Bible Storying. The second will be training for reaching their people group. Pray it will lead to new church starts.

For: (1) Hispanic Women's Retreat, Camp Garaywa, Clinton (WMU); (2) GA Camp Staff Interviews, Camp Garaywa, Clinton (WMU); (3) Please pray today for Governor Bruce Dinwiddie of Cayman Islands.

Pray for a group of senior high school students who will be working with the Mapuches of Chile and Argentina this month.

For: (1) Substance Abuse (CAC Emphasis); (2) The Buryat Team of Russia has five members who will be renewing visas this month. Pray that the letters of invitation will be prepared in time and that the renewal process will go smoothly. Pray that God will burden the Christian nationals to reach out to the Buryats to share the Good News with them.

Tye and Anne McClain work with Rock On Church in Orange, Calif. Since the church began two years ago with five dedicated people, 60 people have given their lives to Jesus. Pray for encouragement in the vision, wisdom, and financial resources.

For: (1) Church Facilities and Furnishings Workshop, Broadmoor BC, Madison (P/LD); (2) Tom Roach, New Creek, W.Va., is a church planting missionary. Pray that 10 Bible studies can be established, and that at least two will grow into new churches.

A man assisting with language study for workers with Moroccan Arabs in Morocco has been in many good conversations about his life and the life. He has purchased "The Passion of the Christ" to watch with his family and has asked for a Bible. Pray for him to understand it and that the Holy Spirit will draw him to Christ.

Missionary Mary Wood has had several opportunities recently to build relationships and give guidance to a struggling Zulu church in a community near where she lives in Durban, South Africa. Pray for this church to be light to their community and reach outside the church to those who desperately need Jesus.



MISSISSIPPI CHRIST FOLLOWERS

FRIDAY, APRIL 8

8 a.m.-noon Ministry Projects*
3:30-4:30 p.m. Prayer & Share Celebration
5-6:15 Missions Banquet
6:30 Worship Celebration & Acts 1:8
Commissioning Service
Featuring: Dramatist: Laurita Miller

For info contact
the WMU
601-292-3319
or
1-800-748-1651.

SATURDAY, APRIL 9

7:30 a.m. Former Executive Board Breakfast
8:45-10 Conferences
10:15 Worship Celebration & Business Session
Featuring: Mississippi Choctaw Women's Choir
1:00 p.m. Adjourn

•AMC 2005 Ministry Projects

One Person Giving One Day = One Changed Life

PrayerWalking, Ministry to the Military, New Church Starts, Acts of Kindness Ministry,
Minor Repairs/Painting, Community Outreach

During AMC 2005, you will have the opportunity to participate in ministry projects all across the Mississippi Gulf Coast. Ministry Projects will be planned for Friday, April 8, from 8:00 a.m.-noon. There is no cost, but registration is required.



Encourage a MK with a birthday card!

5-1-89

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5-10-83

MISS KIMBERLY J. HEARON

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MR. MICAH J. PEACOCK

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Theological Education:

Middle America & the Caribbean

5-20-88

MR. JOHN R. McCALL

Parents: Dennis & Margaret

Agriculture: CESA

5-24-91

MISS LAURA M. PURL

Parents: John & Amy

Business Management: West Africa

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FOR SECURITY,

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Please send all to:

Child's name

Parent's name

MBCB Stewardship Dept.

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Jackson MS 39205

HOUSE TOPS

JUST FOR THE RECORD

5. The children's choir of **First Church, Foxworth**, presented *Meet Me at the Manger* on Dec. 19 under the direction of Samantha Armstrong.

6. The youth choir of **First Church, Foxworth**, presented *A Strange Way to Save the World* on Dec. 19 under the direction of Herchel and Lill Johnson.

7. **First Church, Ocean Springs**, AWANA program named their "Sparky of the Month", grades K-2 and their "T & T" Clubber of the month, grades 3-6, for fall '04. Shown top, left to right, are Hannah Harvey, Joshua Harvey, Karly Knochel, and Kyle Shrek; and bottom, from left, Benji Zello, Caitlin Baker, Britney Lowery, and Ryan Harvey.

8. **Mt. Olive Church, Carroll Association**, recently honored Juanita Daves for her 40 years of service as WMU director. Shown in front is Daves with, front left to right, Lillie Daves, Jane Blair, Estelle Cooper, Miriam Smith, and George Smith.

9. Since May, Tino Trevino has been meeting in homes with Leland hispanics, and on Feb. 11, the group moved into a facility provided by **Bogue Church**. Thirty-one people attended the first service. Trevino and his wife Vicky are shown on the right.

10. **Concord Church, Benton-Tippah Association**, observed Baptist Men's Day on Jan. 23. Lay speaker Randy Stacks brought the morning message. Shown are music director Gary Kennedy, Stacks, and pastor Robert E. Walker.

11. **Mercy's Mark Quartet**, Nashville, Tenn., will be in concert at **Puckett Church, Puckett**, March 13, 7 p.m. A love offering will be taken.

12. **First Church, Crystal Springs**, will host An Evening with Dottie Rambo Mar. 20, 6 p.m. For more information, call (601) 892-1149.



12. Rambo

13. **Skene Church, Boyle**, exceeded their Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. Their goal was \$3200 and the church, with a resident membership of 129, gave \$7124.

14. **First Church, Olive Branch**, will honor retiring pastor P. J. Scott after 30 years of service Apr. 3, 10:15 a.m., with a reception for Scott and his wife from 2-4 p.m.



5. Children's Choir, First Church, Foxworth



6. Youth Choir, First Church, Foxworth



8. Mt. Olive WMU Honors Juanita Daves

HOMEcomings & REVIVALS

Homecoming for **Holly Springs Church, Lincoln County**, will be held on Sun., Mar. 20. Sunday school, 9:30 a.m.; business meeting, 10:45 a.m.; special music by Gloryland, 11:00 a.m. Covered dish lunch. All proceeds go to the cemetery fund. For more information, contact Glen McInnis at (662) 643-2445.

Kreole Ave. Church, Moss Point, will hold a revival on Mar. 13-16 led by Argile Smith. Services: Sun., 10:30 a.m., followed by dinner on the grounds,

6:00 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7:00 p.m. For more information, call (228) 475-1306. Don Womble, pastor.

Trinity Church, Pearl, will hold a homecoming on Mar. 13, at 11:00 a.m. followed by covered dish lunch in the fellowship hall at noon. For more information, please call (601) 939-3217.

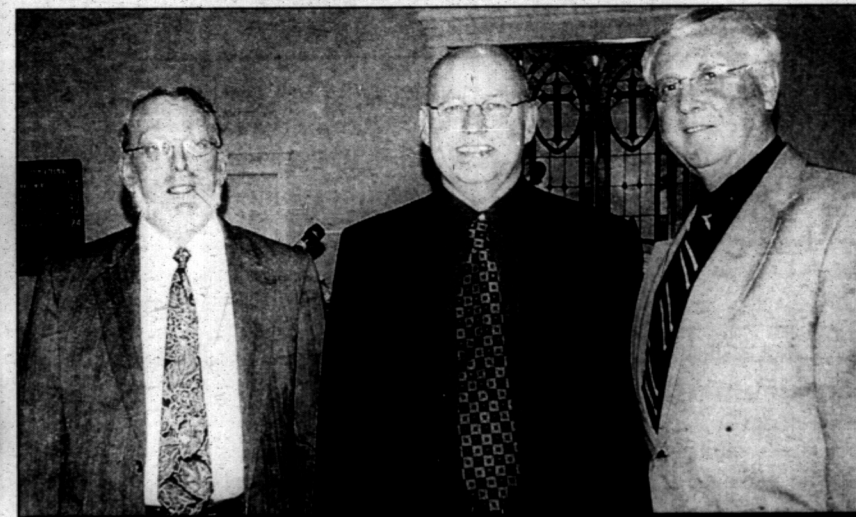
Benton Church, Benton: Revival, Mar. 13-16; Sunday, 10:30 a.m. and 5 p.m.; Mon.-Wed., 7 p.m. Gene Fant, Sr., evangelist; Mona Faith, worship leader; Charles Moore, pastor.



7. First Church, Ocean Springs, AWANA Group



9. New Hispanic Church Plant, Leland



10. Kennedy, Stacks, and Walker, Baptist Men's Day

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KOTMA TDC RATMA YA
JSEQZREZAC · SDQF NFS
QBOFSKB QBA IDFGAC-
KA FX KFC, TDC FX
LAWSW FSO EFOC.

WAMFDC RAQAO FDA:
QGF

Clue: K = G

Have fun with cryptography and exercise your Bible knowledge. A King James Version Bible verse has been encoded by letter substitution. The same letter is substituted throughout the puzzle. Solve by trial and error. Answer to last week's puzzle: John Four:Thirty-Six

1. William Carey College (WCC) Baptist Student Union is sponsoring seven summer missionaries this year who will be stationed in six different states in the United States. WCC's missionaries shown, include, back, left to right, Jared Pierce, Taylorsville; Chris Knight, Runnelstown; Mandy Gilmore, Puckett; and Ashley Pounds, Bellesontaine. Front row, left to right, Katie Curry, Greensburg, La.; Richard Harbison, Sumrall; and Shannon Armstrong, Maryville, Mo.

2. Eight WCC Coast students received 23 of 25 awards presented in the Student Division of the Mississippi Gulf Coast Advertising Awards competition held recently in Biloxi. Winners include Frayna Etheridge, Bay St. Louis; Eryn Grech, Gulfport; Brandi Smith, Picayune; Ashley Field, Kenner, La.; Elizabeth Gongora, Corpus Christi, Tex.; Tiffany Stone, Gulfport; Velkis Rameriz, Biloxi; and Robert McMorrow, Picayune.

3. The WCC Speech and Debate Team received two first place awards in overall sweepstakes and individual events sweepstakes at the University of Houston Cougar Classic held

recently in Texas. The Crusader team also placed fourth in debate sweepstakes.

4. Members of Blue Mountain College's (BMC) BSU will spend their March 14-18 spring break on mission trips to Texas and New York. Fourteen BMC students and staff will participate in Mission Arlington, Arlington, Tex., and 21 students and staff will travel to New York and perform inner-city mission projects.

5. John T. Maley, Memphis, Tenn., was awarded Mississippi College's (MC) Byrd Memorial Preaching Award. Shown are Harold Bryson, Chair of the Department of Christian Studies; Maley; and Harrell N. Byrd, Brandon, son of David and Maude Byrd. The Byrds established the scholarship at MC.

6. MC student Claire Nettles, Clinton, won a first place award at the University of

Memphis' 25th Annual Undergraduate Chemistry Research Conference. Nettles works in the Molecular Biophysics Research Group of professor Reid Bishop.



6. Nettles



1. BSU Missionaries, WCC



5. Bryson, Maley, and Byrd, MC

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FLAT TOP UNITY BAPTIST CHURCH is seeking God's will as we search for a Bi-vocational pastor. If interested, please send resume to pastor search committee, 23464 Indian Ridge Road, Picayune, MS 39466.

CANAAN BAPTIST CHURCH, COLUMBUS, MISS., is prayerfully considering applications for the position of part-time youth director. Please submit resumes to R. Peal, 1332 Cal-

Steens Road, Steens, MS 39766 or call (662) 574-0617.

CHRISTIAN FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATOR needed 10-12 hrs week during office hours. Two years of college required with 3 years related experience. Applicants must have knowledge of GL, Quick books, excel, and Shelby systems. Resumes should include personal and professional references and mailed to personnel committee, Liberty Baptist Church, 5199 Lakeland Drive, Flowood, MS 39232.

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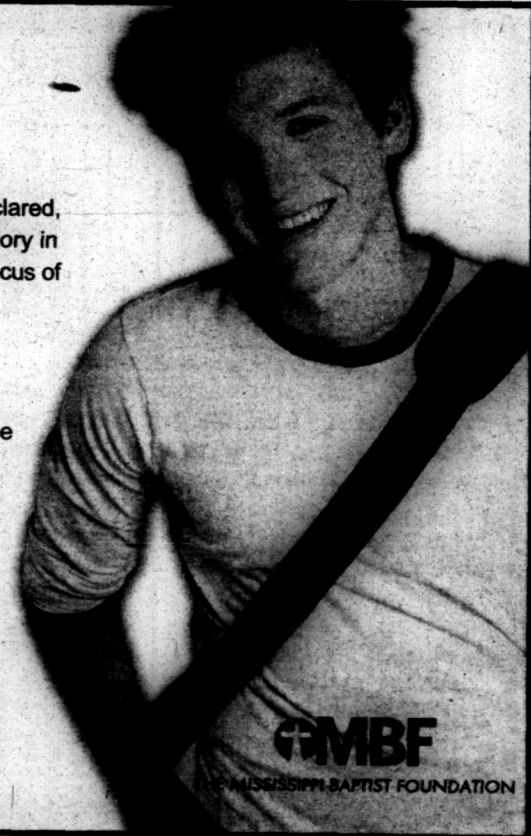
MISSISSIPPI BAPTIST FOUNDATION

Scholarship Ministry

The apostle Paul expressed confidence in his Lord when he declared, "And my God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19). This well-known verse highlights the focus of the Mississippi Baptist Foundation's Scholarship Ministry.

Due to the generosity of many faithful Christian stewards, the Foundation has the privilege of providing needs-based supplemental financial assistance to Mississippi students who are pursuing a degree at a Mississippi Baptist college or a Southern Baptist seminary. Most of these endowed scholarship accounts offer specific eligibility guidelines for awarding a scholarship grant. Factors such as field of study, institution attended, and scholarship amount often are included as stipulated criteria for award consideration.

For more information about the Mississippi Baptist Foundation Scholarship Ministry, please contact our office at **Post Office Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205, telephone us at (601) 292-3210, or (800) 748-1651, or visit our website, www.mbcf.org/agencies/mbf. A completed application must be received in the MBF office by April 30.**



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FAMILY BIBLE STUDY

Jesus Our King

John 12:12-15, 18:33-37, 19:1-3, 14-16

By Rick Henson

A king is a ruler. He is in charge of a domain. His domain is called his kingdom. In Old Testament times that kingdom may have been a city, a region, or a nation. In the days of Jesus the government belonged to Rome. The Romans placed puppet kings in countries to appease the dominated people. We have few kings in the world today, and most of them are figureheads with little actual power. Our democratic government has resulted in wonderful freedoms, but it limits our understanding of the power of a king. In Old Testament times the king was the final authority in all decisions. The king had the power of life or death in his words. He controlled all the resources of a nation.

Jesus is often described as a king in the Bible. Revelation 17:14 reads, "These shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall overcome them: for he is Lord of lords, and King of kings: and they that are with Him are called, and chosen, and faithful." Later in Revelation 19:14-16 we read, "And the armies which are in heaven, clothed in fine linen, white and clean, were following Him on white horses. From His mouth comes a sharp sword, so that with it He may strike down the nations, and He will rule them with a rod of iron; and He treads the wine press of the fierce wrath of God, the Almighty. And on His robe and on His thigh He has a name written, 'KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS.'"



Henson

The returning Jesus will be honored in that day far more than He was when He entered Jerusalem riding on a donkey as told in John 12. The people in the city shouted shallow praises that day and even called Him a king. Within days, however, they would be yelling that they had no king but Caesar and calling for Jesus to be crucified. Though their words called Him king, the actions spoke otherwise. Many people today claim that Jesus is their king, though their actions contradict their confession. Others are like the Roman soldiers in John 19 who called Jesus king as a sign of derision. Their false confession was followed by a slap to His face. Some today call Him king, but then slap His face with ungodly living, habitual sin, and unbelief. In Matthew 7 Jesus said that not all of those who call Him, "Lord, Lord," will enter heaven, but only those who do the will of the Father.

When Jesus is the King of our lives, our hearts and lives are His domain, and He is in charge. If Jesus is our King, then we should consult Him about every decision.

"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," Philippians 2:9-11. One day every person who ever lived will worship Jesus as the Lord of all. He will have the preeminent place in all of creation.

Until that day the domain of Jesus is in the hearts of His believers. Jesus told Pilate in John 18 that His kingdom is not of this world. Jesus' kingdom is a spiritual kingdom, not one with geographic boundaries. In every country on this planet are followers the Lord Jesus. While nations rise and fall, governments change frequently, and

our maps are outdated often, the Kingdom of God is eternal and ever growing. According to the statistics at the following web site, every 24 hours 122,000 new believers are baptized into Christian churches around the world. (<http://www.bible.ca/global-religion-statistics-world-christian-encyclopedia.htm>). The Kingdom of God continues to grow numerically as believers share their faith with others.

The kingdom of Jesus is growing daily. He will be the king of all creation one day. So the question that remains is, "Is He your King now?" Each may answer that question by examining his or her life. Have you placed your trust in Jesus for your salvation? In obedience to John 1:12 have you received Jesus into your heart? In obedience to Romans 10:9 have you confessed Jesus as your Lord? Calling Him Lord means that you serve Him as Lord. Only then is Jesus your King.

Rick Henson is pastor of Oakdale Baptist Church, Brandon.

EXPLORE THE BIBLE

Guard Against Sin

Jeremiah 5: 1-5, 7-8, 11-12

By Billie Buckley

Don't do it. Don't you dare do it! Don't teach or study this lesson, "Guarding Against Sin," found in Jeremiah 5 without searching God's word to find your sins. When we guard against sin, we guard against anything God hates because it separates us from a loving relationship with Him.

Jeremiah called hypocrisy, adultery, and complacency sin because they separated the people from God's loving watch care.

These same people never made the connection between their sinfulness and the loss of God's blessings. Yet, through the prophet Jeremiah God said, "Your iniquities have turned these blessings away, and your

sins have kept my good harvest from you." (v.25)

Through the pleading voice of Jeremiah in chapter 5 we are put into the guarding business of protecting, sheltering, and shielding our treasure. The treasure is the power and presence of God in our lives. Here lies the sin of Judah: the denial of His presence and power; the indifference to sin's consequences; the contempt for His prophets. Simply put, no time for God. No time to guard this priceless privilege of knowing Him. Let's see how we can take time do this through the following verses.

Protect your treasure from hypocrisy. (vv. 1-5) In these verses, Jeremiah is telling us



Buckley

what happens when we disregard oneness with God and His ways by playing the role of a hypocrite. You see, a hypocrite is one who consciously plays two parts for his own double-dealing end. Judah was filled with hypocrites. As Jeremiah jogged through Jerusalem, he was looking for just one honest, sincere soul to bargain with so God would drive Babylon from the gates.

He could find no one among the poor or foolish ranks or among the leaders of the land. All had taken the bait and gotten hooked, refusing to repent. They refused to guard themselves from walking away from an intimate love relationship with Jehovah God.

There was no need for a treasure hunt to take place for the treasure (God's power and presence) was not hidden. Neither did God turn off or turn down the spout of His

love and forgiveness. They simply wandered away from the flow because there was no guarding from sin and its consequences. If Jeremiah jogged through our neighborhoods today would he find us among the hypocrites or among the faithful?

Shelter your treasure from adultery. (vv. 9-9) In these verses, strong warnings were given against expecting God's blessings while the people were involved with spiritual idolatry and the social sin of adultery. Unashamedly, the people patronized the prostitutes. Even today, spiritual idolatry always opens the door to immorality.

Because the people worshipped false gods in the Lord's land, they had to serve foreign masters in a foreign land. The root cause was their idolatry and immoral living.

May we as a nation reflect upon our immoral conduct that has been the result of much of our crime and diseases. May we not repeat the sin of Judah. We join them in their sins by the

denial of His presence and power in our lives; our indifference to the consequences of sin; and our contempt for His spokespersons.

Shield you treasure from complacency. (vv.11-12) Again on his journey through Jerusalem, Jeremiah searched for just one man who did not call him a liar or one who acknowledged God's voice of warning through the prophet.

With the voice of arrogant complacency the people bragged, "Nothing bad will happen to us: not famine, not war. No harm whatsoever will come because of our actions. Because of our covenant relationship, God will overlook our sin." This was a useless way to deal with their sin.

Today there are many other useless ways to deal with this sin of complacency. We can bury it; play the blame game; take a drink; pop a pill. None of this works, but God and His word has some radical good news for us.

Buckley is a member of Petal-Harvey Church, Petal.

Guidelines for submitting news and photographs

The Baptist Record is pleased to publish news and photographs of special events that take place in cooperating churches of the Mississippi Baptist Convention.

News submitted for publication in The Baptist Record must be either (a) typewritten, (b) neatly printed on 8 1/2 by 11-inch paper, or (c) neatly printed on standardized forms provided by the newspaper. All articles must be received in writing; no articles will be accepted over the telephone.

News may be submitted electronically to the address below, and must be contained in the message segment of an e-mail form. Due to increasing virus threats, no text attachments will be accepted. Photograph attachments are permissible.

Please make articles concise. Include the **who, what, when, where** details of the story, along with a contact person's address and telephone number.

Photographs may be color or black and white. Instant photos and digital printouts

are not reproducible. Digital photos may be used if submitted as a JPEG file via either (a) e-mail, (b) three-and-a-half inch floppy disk, or (c) CD. Photos must be clear, sharp, and well-lighted.

All news items are subject to editing,

and all photographs are subject to cropping. Photographs must depict people. No landscape-, building-, or object-only photographs will be printed. News items and/or photographs can be published one time only. Deadline for submitting news is one week prior to requested publication date.

Articles that are not date-sensitive will be published on a space-available basis. Requests to return photographs must be accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope.

Submit news and photographs to The Baptist Record, P.O. Box 530, Jackson, MS 39205-0530. FAX: (601) 292-3330. E-mail: baptistrecord@mbcb.org.

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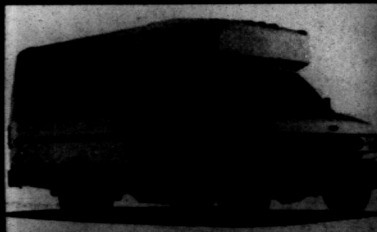


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SWBTS journal explores major religions

FORT WORTH, Texas (BP) — The latest edition of the Southwestern Journal of Theology, a publication of Southwestern Seminary (SWBTS) in Ft. Worth, provides insight into the religious marketplace mentality that shapes most Americans and examines how views drawn from other religious traditions have infected Christian churches.

"Americans and others... do not appear to be single store shoppers," the edition's editor, Paul Gritz, writes in the editorial introduction to the volume. "A more subtle challenge for evangelical Christians arises from the mixing and matching of religious beliefs from several stores. People seem to want to customize their religious lives and draw on many sources to do so."

Gritz, Southwestern professor of church history, cites a 2002

Barna Research Group study which notes that Christians have adopted spiritual views from Islam, secular humanism, Eastern religions, and even Wicca. Barna cites biblical illiteracy as the reason for the trend.

The journal focuses on four of the most prominent non-Christian religious movements today — Mormonism, the Jehovah's Witnesses, Wicca, and "Pop Psychology."

Cky Carrigan, national interfaith evangelism missionary with the North American Mission Board in Atlanta and visiting professor of missions at Southeastern Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., contributes an article on the theology of Mormons, one of the fastest-growing religious movements in the United States.

Carrigan addresses primarily the Christological doctrines of Mormonism, including the atonement and the belief that Jesus Christ was born as the result of sexual intercourse between Elohim and Mary.

The article on Mormonism supplies numerous statements from Mormon leaders and "apostles" who make claims contradictory to 2,000 years of historical, biblical Christianity. The article also examines implications for evangelizing Mormons.

Meanwhile, an article by Kevin Kennedy, assistant professor of theology at Southwestern, compares the teachings of the ancient heretic Arius with the modern teachings of Jehovah's Witnesses.

"The presumption and impiety of Arius and his associates are echoed in the teachings of the Jehovah's Witnesses. Indeed, from the earliest days of their history, the Jehovah's Witnesses have viewed Arius as one of the great champions of the 'true' faith because he rejected the deity of Christ and the doctrine of the trinity," Kennedy writes.

"In many respects, the Christology of the Jehovah's Witnesses is analogous to that of Arius. Jesus in his pre-human state was a creature. Before the Father created him, he did not exist. The Son alone was created directly by the Father, while the Son brought into being all other created reality," Kennedy writes. He adds that such beliefs lead to further "absurdities" in theological thought.

William E. Gordon Jr., an associate with the interfaith evangelism team of the North American Mission Board, discusses the rapid growth of the contemporary Wiccan movement in the previous century. The occult movement has grown so rapidly that witches now boast that their belief system is the fastest-growing movement in America, with some five million adherents to the mythology.

Gordon examines the roots of Wiccan beliefs in animism, polytheism, and pantheism. He also examines the rituals practiced by "covens," or Wiccan groups, and he provides insight in how to best share the gospel with Wiccans.

W. Michael McGuire, pro-

fessor of psychology and counseling at Southwestern, examines the voices of two prominent "pop psychologists" that are competing with the church's role as a place of hope and counseling.

Those voices, radio/TV celebrities Laura Schlessinger and Phil McGraw, have become the guiding light for many Americans when their advice really amounts to anecdotes and a fair dose of common sense, McGuire writes. "Schlessinger's earlier works reflect her secularism and her last is distinctively Jewish. McGraw, who professes Christianity but admits no theological expertise, promotes a number of speculative ideas that are difficult if not impossible to reconcile with Scripture."

Doug Blount, managing editor of the journal, said he hopes the journal will be a "useful tool for people who are ministering in a context where they will be rubbing elbows with people in non-Christian traditions and especially those with a particularly American cultural origin."

The issue of the Southwestern Journal of Theology that examines American religious movements is available for \$12. To subscribe to the Southwestern Journal of Theology, write to Editorial Assistant, Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, P.O. Box 22608, Fort Worth, Texas, 76122, or call 817-923-1921 ext. 2820. A one-year subscription is \$31.

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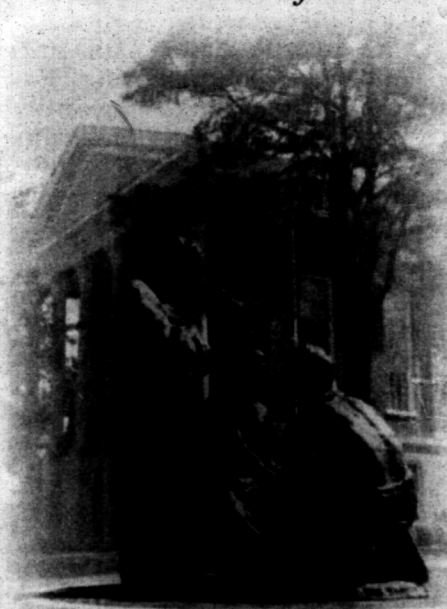


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